

REMARKS

Upon entry of the foregoing amendments, claims 17-35 are pending.

Applicants note with appreciation the indicated allowability of claims 5, 7 and 13-15.

The drawings were objected to as noted on Form PTO 948, Notice of Draftspersons Patent Drawing Review. Accordingly, applicants are submitting herewith proposed corrected formal drawings for the Draftspersons review.

Claims 1-16 were objected to because of several informalities. Additionally, claims 1-16 were rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter that applicant regards as the invention. Accordingly, applicants have canceled claims 1-16 and rewritten them as new claims 17-35. In rewriting the claims, applicants have addressed the concerns of the Examiner. However, it is respectfully submitted that where the Examiner objected to compounds that included the variables "x" and "y", these variables are appropriate and one skilled in the art understands their meaning. Accordingly, they were left in the rewritten claims. It is respectfully submitted that, a compound listed as, for example, "H<sub>x</sub>O<sub>y</sub>" is readily understood by one skilled in the art to refer to a compound that includes "x" parts hydrogen and "y" parts oxygen. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 17-35 fully comply with 35 USC §112 and therefor, it is respectfully requested that the objection to the claims and the rejections under 35 USC §112 be withdrawn.

Claims 1-2, 4, 8-10, 12 and 16 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Frech et al. (US Patent No. 5,958,624).

Claims 3 and 6 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by or in the alternative, under 35 §103(a) as being obvious over Frech et al.

Claim 11 was rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Frech et al. as applied previously and further in view of Green et al. (US Patent No. 6,245,847).

These rejections are respectfully traversed and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

It is respectfully submitted that Frech et al. is an improper reference under 35 §102(b). Applicants respectfully note that Frech et al. was issued September 28, 1999 while the present application has a priority date of May 12, 1998. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

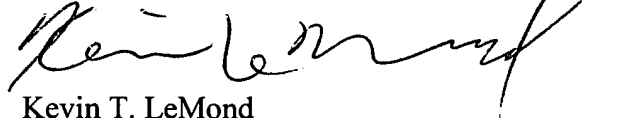
Furthermore, applicants submit herewith a Declaration of the inventors under 37 CFR §1.131 that establishes an invention date that is at least prior to Frech's 35 §102(e) filing date of December 18, 1997. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Frech et al. is also an improper reference under 35 USC §102(e).

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 415-576-0200.

Respectfully submitted,



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